

# Bard

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## Recommended Citation

Kelly, Robert, "janC2011" (2011). *Robert Kelly Manuscripts*. Paper 352.  
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# Bard

= = = = =

The meaning of meaning you

something about snow, something

about flying down the air

with nothing for wings,

with no kind of wings

something about being there

in such a way that any room

organizes itself around you

I can't help it, it's love

makes you do all this

and love that lets me see you do it.

It is dumb and tremendous and all over you

like music when your mind's on something else.

But there is nothing else.

Just this, with you

sitting in the middle of it

having just come back from everywhere.

Something about a boat in the sky,  
something about jungles, something about a smile.

I look at you like a little boy  
who has just found the book he always wanted to read,  
I mean the man hoping for it all his life.

9 January 2011

= = = = =

There are things

that have faces.

They face us.

Lustrous with distance

to see them is

to be caressed.

This disperses

and regathers.

There is water

on it often

and no ship.

Where would one

come or go from

to be here

he asked I had

no answer but edges

things sometimes

activate the space  
between you have

go slow to hear  
them one of us said.

10 January 2011

= = = = =

Getting ready to be right,

write:

*The Wrong of Winter*

not by Stravinsky. What

do mortals know of winter?

We who have eaten all

the colors know

all the dialects of light.

A shudder in the wind,

our knowledge has cold hands.

But who are we?

10 January 2011

= = = = =

A good essay is one such that the reader of it has no choice but start writing in response, contradiction. Every word is an investigation. Enough to know that, and everything to be learned.

*Exemplum:* The classic Golden Age detective story—clue, deduction, induction, decipherment—blossomed in the age when Science ascended in public view to be both a fashion and a requirement. No surprise that sleuths were scientists –amateurs like Sherlock Holmes or professional like Dr.Thorndike—or polymaths like Philo Vance. But as time passes, wars come and go, science seems more humdrum, familiar, dangerous with a whole raft of not so interesting fatalities of its own. The scientist detective gives way to the working cop. Procedurals replace brainteasers, and violence spills from the battlefield into gangland, professional detectives combatting professional murderers. Efficiency replaces intuition and deduction. Recently, the procedural shifts from ordinary detectives and ordinary police (however skillful) and turns to crazed personages who are more avengers than decipherers. The passage from calm Holmes's scarred chemistry bench to the half-demented lethal tattooed lady is a vivid histomap of the last century or so.

\* \* \*

Why should the essay say any more than this? The reader instantly leaps to agreements and disagreements, comes up with further instances, evidences, contradiction, revisions, adding ideas or rubbing them out. Why should the writer spoil that pleasure by preempting the arguments? Is it a gift to the reader, this business of reading, gives the reader the dance to do.

11 January 2011

= = = = =

Does it look as if these things mean it  
a coaster with a coffee cup a vase of flowers  
specify: anemones indigo and pink and red  
we care about these things because we are the living  
and have nowhere to turn but what is here.  
Thereafter in a blue glass vase settled they  
opened in the warm room, snow light, the blue  
light between day and remembering. The wolf  
hour people called it, teeth and running and deep warm fur.

11 January 2011



= = = = =

The opportunity lives with me  
said the blue jay the seed  
is my savior in all this snow

the cardinal asked if that is so  
who do I who am such a different hue  
find the same salvation in my need?

Ah foolish folks the sparrows call  
we proliferate around your feet  
eat anything and are no color at all.

12 January 2011

## **WATCHING BIRDS IN THE SNOW**

I wish Charles Parker would come back  
music without intelligence is soup,  
real intelligence not learning and not vogue.  
The body thinks its way out through the breath.

12 January 2011

= = = = =

The woman entered the voice  
she saw a body painted on the ceiling

it was blue and had gold stars on it  
not like the constellations we see over America

it was her own body and it ceilinged her

safe in the walls of the voice  
in which she was speaking.

The man lay quiet in the listening  
knowing that she had come

and done to time what had to be done

All the walls were down. Now  
all of a sudden hearing heard.

12 January 2011

= = = = =

## **HIS SILVER WHISTLE ICED HER LIVING HOUSE**

curling the names  
across the ice  
the Canadian Shield problem  
too many versts for too few names

and every one of them is named me  
I too incolate the tundras  
I too am waiting for everything  
using nothing touching everything

I am a shadow  
waiting for its man  
there's nothing solid about me  
seafoam and roses you know how  
long they last  
wait, how did you  
get onto the ice

I am a margin that nothing meets

but you your twirl, camel, illegal leap  
and now the sit-spin

that screws right down through the ice  
down through the water  
down through the earth  
down through up the other side of the sky

and you are gone from my mind  
with all your cold soft clothes  
but icicles are gleaming in the sun  
on my roof mine mine  
back to the me work again  
the basic broken radio of a self  
plug yanked out of the no-wall  
trickle-charge info of your things  
but now I don't know your name either

asparagus? deep-trenched white cylinder?  
wet mango stone    original seed  
all slippery with religion    vampire?

the bite was on the back of your neck  
never your throat  
who would blemish or suck loose  
the gorgeous instrument from which  
an ordinary word we need  
keeps coming keeps coming

I hardly needed to use teeth

just a word or two of my own  
let me speak, skater,  
and then you zipped away  
flip-girtled over power knees  
sneering back “no word  
is your own let alone two”

and you were gone  
it must not be too far from here  
this sky-rink with no boundaries  
cars parked all over the sky  
their headlights burning to show her Earth  
this amateur stripper giving the cosmos  
the show of its life

we live  
to be revealed

because there is something in us, even me,  
from the beginning  
something the universe needs  
something not so much hidden as forgotten

we think it helps to take things off—  
hence the sciences of striptease  
organic chemistry geology—  
feeble intellect clumsy will

we follow each other over the ice  
hoping to find in you  
what I have forgotten in me

*your body reminds me of before my self*

we don't have to change places here  
it's enough for some nice icicles to form  
depend so gleaming in  
sun moored to the white pine tree  
o little hill

how sad beauty makes us why  
*arioso dolente*

no opus number on the heart  
but still it makes sound  
minimalism narcissism listen to your pulse  
music from the ringing in your ears—  
to go on ice you make  
your foot thin as a knife blade  
to go on snow  
you make your foot broad as a bear paw  
tennis racket a winnowing fan  
yet ice and snow are one same substance – aqua –  
in same old wintertime

what is wrong with us  
the icicle daggering with light

I knew this was the day it starts to begin

who can read my garble  
written word speaks so many meanings  
for a week I live by myself  
in the attic of my bonehouse  
I read the dust that settles  
sifts between pages in the books  
dust that brownians along in sunlight  
through the dusty window  
things I remember from a lifetime of forgetting

I know all this stuff why am I saying it  
it must be you nearby (the weather  
is always at hand) listening  
(everything listens so few people do)  
willing to be (since being means  
to *exist in relation*)

some once-dead Greek

I need here to authenticate  
the leading voice of my dim fugue—  
escape escape

Listening changed me

I knew more the wield of what there is  
it was a moment with a meaning



and all the laughing trucks ran past  
and trees turned red in sunset  
she is coming towards me over the ice  
fast

I am abashed  
before her I wonder year after year  
what kind of dance needs to make the body move  
when the body itself  
in stillness is all possible design redemption  
union mysterious transaction

we people are the fractals of a single endless curve  
the angels whisper that at the end  
of time is forms a perfect sphere.

13 January 2011

## WHAT BUILDINGS SAY AT MIDNIGHT

Walking into a building  
is hearing a sentence

sentences have all kinds of shapes  
and say all sorts of things

I was in the old chapel  
empty except for the moonlight

meager through ivied windows  
made traceries on the stone

at the crossing of the nave  
I lay spread-eagled on my back

and let the cold of the stone flood up in me  
for the coldness of stone

is its language, is the way it speaks  
its information into us

if we listen with our skin  
our answering heat.

And I listened to the shape of the building  
the ancient consciousness expressed.

13 January 2011

## HARMONIELEHRE

There is a harmony of it  
a word I almost heard  
hammering on the house  
woodpecker

                  feed the birds  
the sun takes care of the rest  
that would be a mountain in Japan  
a rural courthouse anywhere

Justice itself is a miscarriage  
of love,

                  the rules are random,  
philosophy is a cry for help,  
jailmail, a thousand volume  
postcard from prison,

                                listen,  
that's all I dare recommend.  
No hope no fear much love  
and hurt none.

                                They're all alive  
they're all waiting for you.

2.

How dare you beak my wall?

Light lets you, and the fact of wood.

I withdraw my question,

the only things we dare put on our feet

is to walk in the other guy's shoes

I live your life you live mine.

The soul puts out bright feathers,

bright skin.

The alluvial habit of time,  
a house is built of wind.

3.

Care. Old farm procedures.

Gather. We are so deep in the dream.

Maybe what all these catastrophes are explaining,  
waking from the dream of system, something  
breaking through, or showing through,  
something there all the time—

I flew over Labrador the ice was green

the ice was blue the coast of the sea was white

I did not know I still don't know

such fear of that beauty.

Sometimes it only counts when you look down.

14 January 2011

= = = = =

I don't know the first thing about people  
all these years and I still move towards them wondering—  
cliffs of Dover? Carib isle? gaunt  
green ice of Labrador and a musk ox groaning?

Who are you when you have a name  
are you a place that walks on two legs  
are you a place I can walk to on my own

who are you when you have a name  
and a physical presence  
or I can see you in the movies

who are you when I know your name  
and you don't know mine?

Who are all these people who do not know my name?

14 January 2011